l: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

visited the grave of the old Hero-Chief, Turki ibn Meheyd, at Aklat Suab. 769

As an offering to the memory of his forebear (Turki was killed in battle against the Ruala, although his daughter Turkiyye was married to the Ruala chieftain, Sattam ibn Sha'lan) Ibn Meheyd had sacrificed a fat camel over the grave: "So that Allah might read his heart and give him victory over the Ruala." This is a heathen, pre-Islamic custom of the Arabian Bedouins.

It would seem that Ibn Meheyd and his vassals had made not only material, but also spiritual preparations for a decisive war against the Ruala. 619 721

Our enemies were now assembled, and the conference of the chiefs was in full swing when we arrived.

Ibn Meheyd looked aged and the bitterness of his thoughts had hardened his features. This unpleasing impression was deepened by his beard and eyebrows, which he had dyed black. [302]

A thick woollen shawl enveloped his head and throat, despite the warm sunny day. He had been a sufferer for years from a wasting fever which he, like so many other Fid'an Bedouins, had contracted in the unhealthy lowlands of the Euphrates. [164]

On our appearance Ibn Meheyd had risen and taken a step forward, but on recognizing the familiar faces of his enemies, he turned back and beckoned to the leader of his Negro bodyguard. Even to me he had not given the customary salute, but only swept me with a black look. Fortunately, I perceived at once that we had put our heads into a hornet's nest, and I whispered to my 619 721 576

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628 his animal before the chief's tent, and, entering, sat down among the guests and visitors. They conversed on all possible 782 topics, *an-nâs tesowlef min ʿarẓ al-ḥači*, as is usually the case, the boy listening eagerly. Suddenly he heard one of the visitors say: "Our blood-stained one, *dammawi*, mentioned that he had found at such and such a place a hole filled with rain water; but look, he has just come back with his water bag full." Great was the joy of the young avenger on finding the culprit so soon, and he took good notice of the tent into which the guilty man carried the water. Crawling in at night, he found him sunk in deep slumber. Shaking him with all the force at his command the boy said:

"Art thou asleep or awake? *ènt nâjem walla' žâʿed.*"

"I am awake, *ana žâʿed.*"

"How canst thou sleep with my father in thy belly? *čejf tnâm w-abûj bebaṭnak.*"

"Not thy father alone but thou too wilt be in my belly," replied the culprit, jumping up and grasping his weapon. But at the same moment the boy fired a shot at him from his revolver, *ṭawwar beh ar-ridnijje šamâm*, killing him instantly.

On his return he simply said: "Uncle, I have avenged my father; *jâ ʿammi aḫaḍt ṭâr abûj.*" But the uncle was not to be comforted, thinking that he had not fulfilled his vow. "I vowed not to sleep with my wife before bringing back the blood of my brother. Thou hast now brought it. What am I to do?" Then the more experienced men advised him to dismiss his present wife and to marry anew. This he did.

782 In 1898, when cholera was ravaging the country, the Bed-[164] ouins fled to the desert to escape the contagion, *waḫmen čebîr*, which threatened them. Ever since they have called that year *sanat abu faḳsa*, cholera year. At that time Blejhân eben Meṣreb became seriously ill, and his relatives were convinced that he could not recover, *mâ beh rabeḥ*. When his brother, who was pasturing camels at some place far from the water, heard the news, he left his herd and hastened home, *rawwaḥ min al-ʿazîb*. The sight of Blejhân filled him with terror, for he looked more wretched than any one would have wished to see even his worst enemy appear, *w-allâh aš-šowfat al-ḳašra tamannâha l'aduwwak*. Weeping bitterly, the brother lifted his eyes to heaven and exclaimed:

"O God, a camel I vow to thee at once, if my brother shall again walk full of health and vigor, *ʿadîden w-šedîden.*"

CHAPTER XXIII

DEATH AND AFTER DEATH

DISEASES AND WOUNDS

165 Few Rwala reach a very old age. More than four-fifths of the men either fall in war or perish in consequence of wounds received, 164 while the women die mostly when suckling their babies. Such women as survive this period generally grow to be very old. From diseases the Rwala suffer chiefly in the months of July and August, when they camp in the neighborhood of Damascus, in al-Ruta, Gowlan, al-Mzerib, and Kerajat al-Meleh (the vicinity of Etra and Caf). Kerajat al-Meleh are notorious for their ague, hemma, and malaria, shune; in al-Guba the flies are a real pest; likewise the strong winds which blow there all the time, whirling up the fine sand and dust, are very injurious to the eyes. All these districts are called bilad mabijje by the Rwala, who therefore prefer to camp in either the Nefud or al-Hamad, where the atmosphere is both clear and salubrious, bilad 'adijje.

The following are the diseases most universally known.

164 Hubta: pains in the spine and the head combined with a strong 757 fever. The patient wants to lie only on the flat of his back. For a cure he is burnt with a red-hot iron about the head and temples. This occurs most frequently in winter.

Gederi: smallpox. Treated with red clay diluted in water, which is then poured into the patient's eyes. This disease breaks out towards the end of the sferi season (October--December).

Sarba: pains in the stomach combined with fever and endless thirst. Its cure: the root of the nose is cut through so that it bleeds profusely, and the shoulders are burnt all over. Sometimes a thick thread is pulled through the skin of the shoulder and left there until the wound suppurates. The disease appears in winter, especially after one drinks cold water.

Mwallje: pains in the intestines, accompanied by swelling-also the abdomen hardens. It is treated by laxatives;

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

appears mostly in summer, eating of meat being most frequently the cause. 164● 757

Ḥemma: ague. The cure: burning about the neck. Appears in midsummer.

Sẖûne: a violent fever; lasts two or three days, ceases for a while, and reappears in the months of July, August, and September. The cure: drinking tamarind water.

Ḥeben: ulcers. They are treated with poultices of the *ḥaltîta* and *mbâraka* drugs till the pus flows out.

Šoṭob: hemorrhoids. The cure: a piece of clay is kneaded, shaped like a large nail, allowed to dry, burned to a white heat, and then inserted into the rectum in order to burn out the hemorrhoids.

Rîḥ: rheumatic pains, especially in the *ṣferi* season (October—December). The afflicted limb is burnt for a cure.

Ramad: diseases of the eye. The cure: *ḳoṣt al-eḫt* or *ḳaṭra* and *twejtijjân* drugs are bought, crushed, mixed with woman's milk, and applied to the eye.

Aba ẓhejr: pains in the small of the back compelling the afflicted person to walk with a stoop. It is treated with burning about the small of the back.

Sâbeʿ: chronic fever combined with headache; otherwise the patient feels well but has no appetite, grows thin and weak, and finally dies. This is treated by burning from the nape of the neck across the top of the head down to the nose.

Ḥubejǧǧe: measles. The cure: dates mixed with pepper and butter warmed up and given the patient to eat. Occurs mostly in winter.

ʿAkankaš: eruption on parts of the body, with itching of the skin. This is treated by drinking the *ḥebbḥâr* and *ṭûm* drugs in milk. It occurs in the months of January and February.

ʿAnḳûd: a severe cough accompanied by vomiting, *jaǧ-ḍef*. As a cure the sick man drinks asses' milk. Occurs mostly in winter.

Aba waǧh: stiffness of some part of the face. As a cure they burn the corners of the mouth and stick three lead balls under the skin of the part of the face affected, which is then covered with a red cloth.

Lwêṛef: venereal disease. Cured by inhaling the smoke of some drug strewn over hot coals. It is very rare among the Rwala.

On falling sick a Rwejli instantly ties into his hair or ooo